DECEMBER 1977

ALL INDIA MAGAZINE

SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY
PONDICHERRY

AIM All India Magazine
VOL. VII NO. 5 DECEMBER 1977

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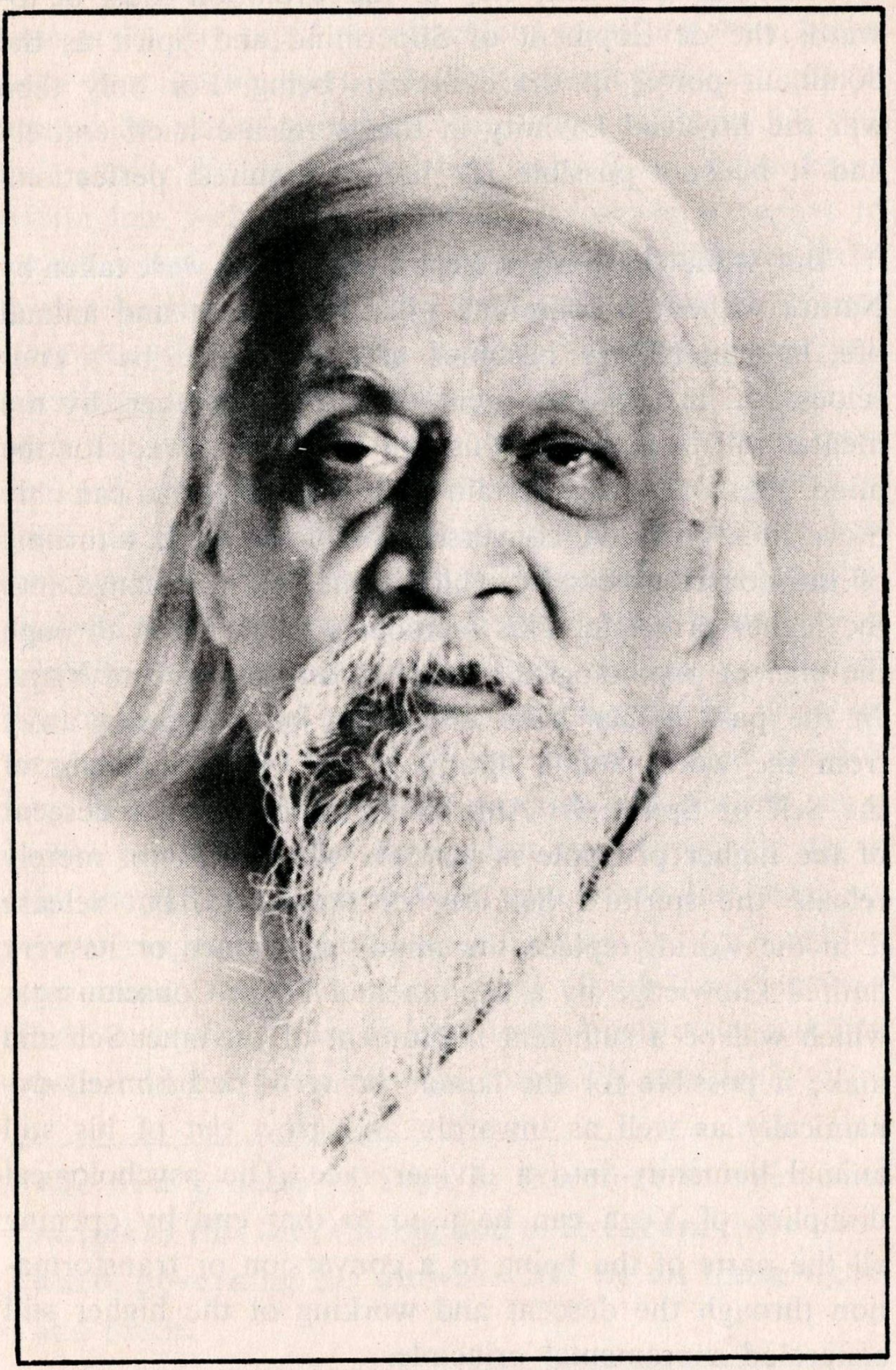
On December 5, 1950 Sri Aurobindo withdrew from his physical body. December 9, 1950 is the Samadhi day. In reply to a question of a Sadhak on how to observe the anniversaries of these days, the Mother has said, "in understanding what death is." Every year, the December issue of the AIM carries some text on this subject. In this issue we reproduce a poem of Sri Aurobindo and Dr. Sanyal's notes on Sri Aurobindo's passing away.

Sri Aurobindo's Teaching and Method of Sadhana

The teachings of Sri Aurobindo starts from that of the ancient sages of India that behind the appearances of the universe there is the Reality of a Being and Consciousness, a Self of all things, one and eternal. All beings are united in that One Self and Spirit but divided by a certain separativity of consciousness, an ignorance of their true Self and Reality in the mind, life and body. It is possible by a certain psychological discipline to remove this veil of separative consciousness and become aware of the true Self, the Divinity within us and all.

Sri Aurobindo's teachings states that this One Being and Consciousness is involved here in Matter. Evolution is the method by which it liberates itself; consciousness appears in what seems to be inconscient, and once having appeared is self-impelled to grow higher and higher and at the same time to enlarge and devlop towards a greater and greater perfection. Life is the first step of this release of consciousness; mind is the second; but the evolution does not finish with mind, it awaits a release into something greater, a consciousness which is spiritual and



supramental. The next step of the evolution must be towards the development of Supermind and Spirit as the dominant power in the conscious being. For only then will the involved Divinity in things release itself entirely and it become possible for life to manifest perfection.

But while the former steps in evolution were taken by Nature without a conscious will in the plant and animal life, in man Nature becomes able to evolve by a conscious will in the instrument. It is not, however, by the mental will in man that this can be wholly done, for the mind goes only to a certain point and after that can only move in a circle. A conversion has to be made, a turning of the consciousness by which mind has to change into the higher principle. This method is to be found through the ancient psychological discipline and practice of Yoga. In the past, it has been attempted by a drawing away from the world and a disappearance into the height of the Self or Spirit. Sri Aurobindo teaches that a descent of the higher principle is possible which will not merely release the spiritual Self out of the world, but release it in the world, replace the mind's ignorance or its very limited knowledge by a supramental Truth-Consciousness which will be a sufficient instrument of the inner Self and make it possible for the human being to find himself dynamically as well as inwardly and grow out of his still animal humanity into a diviner race. The psychological discipline of Yoga can be used to that end by opening all the parts of the being to a conversion or transformation through the descent and working of the higher still concealed supramental principle.

This, however, cannot be done at once or in a short time or by any rapid or miraculous transformation. Many steps have to be taken by the seeker before the supramental descent is possible. Man lives mostly in his surface mind, life and body, but there is an inner being within him with greater possibilities to which he has to awake — for it is only a very restricted influence from it that he receives now and that pushes him to a constant pursuit of a greater beauty, harmony, power and knowledge. The first process of Yoga is therefore to open the ranges of this inner being and to live from there outward, governing his outward life by an inner light and force. In doing so he discovers in himself his true soul which is not this outer mixture of mental, vital and physical elements but something of the Reality behind them, a spark from the one Divine Fire. He has to learn to live in his soul and purify and orientate by its drive towards the Truth the rest of the nature. There can follow afterwards an opening upward and descent of a higher principle of the Being. But even then it is not at once the full supramental Light and Force. For there are several ranges of consciousness between the ordinary human mind and the supramental Truth-Consciousness. These intervening ranges have to be opened up and their power brought down into the mind, life and body. Only

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afterwards can the full power of the Truth-Consciousness work in the nature. The process of this self-discipline or Sadhana is therefore long and difficult, but even a little of it is so much gained because it makes the ultimate release and perfection more possible.

There are many things belonging to older systems that are necessary on the way — an opening of the mind to a greater wideness and to the sense of the Self and the Infinite, an emergence into what has been called the cosmic consciousness, mastery over the desires and passions; an outward asceticism is not essential, but the conquest of desire and attachment and a control over the body and its needs, greeds and instincts are indispensable. There is a combination of the principles of the old systems, the way of knowledge through the mind's discernment between Reality and the appearance, the heart's way of devotion, love and surrender and the way of works turning the will away from motives of self-interest to the Truth and the service of a greater Reality than the ego. For the whole being has to be trained so that it can respond and be transformed when it is possible for that greater Light and Force to work in the nature.

In this discipline, the inspiration of the Master, and in the difficult stages his control and his presence are indispensable — for it would be impossible otherwise to go through it without much stumbling and error which would prevent all chance of success. The Master is one who has risen to a higher consciousness and being and he is often regarded as its manifestation or representa-

tive. He not only helps by his teaching and still more by his influence and example but by a power to communicate his own experience to others.

This is Sri Aurobindo's teaching and method of practice. It is not his object to develop any one religion or to amalgamate the older religions or to found any new religion — for any of these things would lead away from his central purpose. The one aim of his Yoga is an inner self-development by which each one who follows it can in time discover the One Self in all and evolve a higher consciousness than the mental, a spiritual and supramental consciousness which will transform and divinise human nature.

August 1934 SRI AUROBINDO

(*On Himself*, Cent. ed. vol. 26, pp. 95-97)

Sri Aurobindo came to tell us: "One need not leave the earth to find the Truth, one need not leave the life to find his soul, one need not abandon the world or have only limited beliefs to enter into relation with the Divine. The Divine is everywhere, in everything and if He is hidden, it is because we do not take the trouble to discover Him."

The Mother

The Mother

In Tokyo — 1916

Remember and Offer

Every day, every moment should be an occasion for a new and completer consecration, and not one of those enthusiastic and flurried consecrations, over-active, full of illusions about the work, but a deep and silent consecration which is not necessarily visible but penetrates and transfigures all action. Our mind, solitary and peaceful, should always repose in Thee and from that pure summit have the exact perception of realities, of the sole and eternal Reality behind all unstable and fleeting appearances....

21. 2. 1914

Use of Miracles

Q: Why didn't you or Sri Aurobindo make a greater use of miracles as a means of overcoming resistance in the external human consciousness? Why this kind of self-effacement where outer things are concerned, this non-intervention or discretion?

As for Sri Aurobindo, I only know what he told me several times. People give the name of "miracle" only to interventions in the material or the vital world. And these interventions are always mixed with ignorant and arbitrary movements.

But the number of miracles that Sri Aurobindo performed in the mind is incalculable; but naturally you could only see it if you had a very straight, very sincere, very pure vision — a few people did see it. But he refused — this I know — he refused to perform any vital or material miracles, because of this mixture.

My experience is that in the present state of the world, a direct miracle, material or vital, must necessarily take into account a great many elements of falsehood that are unacceptable — they are necessarily miracles of falsehood. And they are unacceptable. I have seen what people call miracles; I saw many of them at

one period, but this gave a right of existence to many things which to me are not acceptable.

What men call "miracles" nowadays are almost always performed by vital beings or by men who are in contact with vital beings, and this is a mixture — it accepts the reality of certain things, the truth of certain things that are not true. And this is the basis on which it works. So that is unacceptable.

Q: I did not quite understand what you meant by saying that Sri Aurobindo performed miracles in the mind.

I mean that he used to introduce the supramental force into the mental consciousness. Into the mental consciousness, the mental consciousness that governs all material movements, he would introduce a supramental formation or power or force which immediately changed the organisation. This produces immediate effects which seem illogical because they do not follow the normal course of movements according to mental logic.

He himself used to say that when he was in possession of the supramental power, when he could use it at will and focus it on a specific point with a definite purpose, it was irrevocable, inevitable: the effect was absolute. That can be called a miracle.

For example, take someone who was sick or in pain; when Sri Aurobindo was in possession of this supramental power — there was a time when he said that it was completely under his control, that is, he could do what he wanted with it, he could apply it where he liked — then he would apply this Will, for example, to some dis-

order, either physical or vital or, of course, mental — he would apply this force of greater harmony, of greater order, this supramental force, and focus it there, and it would act immediately. And it was an order: it created an order, a harmony greater than the natural harmony. That is, if it was a case of healing, for example, the healing would be more perfect and more complete than any obtained by ordinary physical and mental methods.

There were a great many of them. But people are so blind, so embedded in their ordinary consciousness that they always give "explanations", they can always give an explanation. Only those who have faith and aspiration and something very pure in themselves, that is, who truly want to know they were able to perceive it.

When the Power was there, he even used to say that it was effortless; all he had to do was to apply this supramental power of order and harmony and instantly the desired result was achieved.

THE MOTHER

(*The Collected Works of the Mother*, vol. 10, pp. 160-62)

To express our gratitude to Sri Aurobindo we can do nothing better than to be a living demonstration of his teaching.

The Mother

The Pilgrim of the Night

I made an assignation with the Night;
    In the abyss was fixed our rendezvous:
In my breast carrying Gods's deathless light
    I came her dark and dangerous heart to woo.
I left the glory of the illumined Mind
    And the calm rapture of the divinised soul
And travelled through a vastness dim and blind
    To the grey shore where her ignorant waters roll.
I walk by the chill wave through the dull slime
    And still that weary journeying knows no end;
Lost is the lustrous godhead beyond Time,
    There comes no voice of the celestial Friend,
And yet I know my footprints' track shall be
    A pathway towards Immortality.

(*Collected Poems*, Cent. ed. vol. 5, p. 132)

A "Call" from Pondicherry

On the evening of the 29th November 1950, as I was resting after a heavy day, a servant brought me a telegram which read: "FLY — URGENT — MOTHER". Never could I have imagined the amount of meaning there was in those few words.

Then it came to me — Is Sri Aurobindo ill ? — Why otherwise would the Mother send such a telegram ? Other thoughts crept into my mind and I could not decide how best to equip myself for the errand.

The next morning, 30th November, I flew to Madras, only to find that the next train for Pondicherry did not leave until 9.50 p.m., and so I would reach my destination by 7 a.m. the next morning. It was a torment to think that after travelling 1000 miles in 5 hours it was now to take me twenty hours to cover 100 miles. I looked at the telegram — read it once again — No ! I could not waste time, so I hired a car.

It took me an hour to obtain a permit from the Police authorities, who looked me over thoroughly, trying to decide whether I was a smuggler or some thirsty

drinker wanting a joy ride to French India. They finally decided however that I could go. The driver being assured of extras, my car literally flew along the roads to Pondicherry having only to stop twice at the inefficient and rude customs barriers — and by six in the evening I was at the Mother's feet in the Ashram playground. As usual She greeted me with her heavenly smile, saying She had expected me that very evening. She then told me of Sri Aurobindo's illness and asked me to examine Him; She added that She would be coming to His room after the programme was over in the playground.

On the way Dr. Nirod of the Ashram and my young colleague Dr. Satya Sen acquainted me with the history and present condition of the Master. Softly but quickly I ascended the stairs and entered the room. There I looked on the Master, my divine patient, semi-recumbent on His bed, seemingly unconcerned, eyes closed, like a statue of massive peace. I approached the bed, knelt by His side and made my pranams at His feet. Champaklal called: "Look, Master, who has come." There was a quiver on His face; heavy eyelids opened a little — then all was still again. But again Champaklal called: "Master, see, Sanyal has come." This time He opened His eyes fully, looked at me and smiled — Oh, such a smile, serene and beautiful, it carried one to ecstasy, lighting the innermost corners of the heart.

He placed His hand on my head and lovingly patted it a few times — all thoughts vanished, it seemed my heart had stopped. I was overpowered with a mighty

peace and calm. He had closed His eyes — except for His respiration all was still and a great silence reigned. Then Champaklal whispered delightedly, "He has given you a Darshan Smile and Blessing." — It was a blessing no words could describe; only one who has seen it and known it in his heart could appreciate what it meant, for it was an experience of the soul.

I waited for the opportunity to become the doctor. I asked Him what the trouble was and whether I could give Him any relief. I put to Him the regular professional questions, perhaps then forgetting that my patient was the Divine housed in a mortal frame, and He answered: "Trouble ? Nothing troubles me — and suffering ! one can be above it." I mentioned the urinary difficulties. "Well, yes", He answered, "I had some difficulties but they have been relieved, and now I do not feel anything." Again there was silence.

We retired to the next room and I had a consultation with Nirod and Satya. His urine analysis report had arrived, showing slight albumen and sugar, sp. gr. a little above normal. The Mother now entered the room and stood in silence near the foot of the bed and watched Sri Aurobindo. Soon She called me out into the next room where I explained the position to Her, that He was suffering from a mild kidney infection — otherwise there was nothing very serious as far as could be judged from the urine report.

We thought that, *Deo volente*, continuous drainage

would suffice and antibiotics would gradually improve the rest.

The following morning, 1st December, was very encouraging; our Lord was absolutely alert and responsive and His temperature was normal. After His sponging He took His simple breakfast and even cracked jokes with us. I was giving Him a scalp massage and enquired if He was liking it or not. He remarked: "I know you went to England for your Fellowship but where did you learn massaging ?" I suggested that we would like to have His blood examined for a detailed bio-chemical examination, to which He smiled and retorted: "You doctors can think only in terms of diseases and medicines, but always there is much more effectual knowledge beyond and above it. I do not need anything." All of us were very happy by this most remarkable improvement and the day passed on.

The next day, 2nd December, there was little change except for a rise of one degree in temperature towards the evening. The day was a heavy one for the Mother as it was the second day of the annual display in the playground; but as soon as the activities were over She came to His room and stood at the foot of His bed. Her countenance was very grave but She did not say anything. I suggested, as the urinary infection was again flaring up in spite of continuous drainage, that we should try Antibiotics and Infusion therapy. Mother then warned me that orthodox methods of treatment were unsuitable for Him — not only would Sri Aurobindo not like them but they would be harmful. She also reminded me that my

patient was the Divine, "He will work out whatever is necessary." I could only give some simple medicines to allay symptoms if any.

We doctors were in a state of perplexity; true, our patient was an Avatar; true, He had cured innumerable ailments in the sadhaks as also in Himself several times — would He not now cure Himself ?

Champaklal once entreated Him in a favourable moment: "Why don't you use your force and cure yourself, Master?" He kept silent and showed rather a dislike for such questions.

December 3rd — After a rather quiet and restful night he looked better that morning and when the usual morning routine was over Nirod offered Him some fruit juice which He enjoyed.

The temperature had dropped to normal and so much was our relief that at 11 a.m. while making my Pranams to the Mother I ventured to suggest that as the Master was steadily improving I might perhaps leave that evening. The Mother remained silent; She looked very grave. I looked into Her eyes and felt a quiver, a pain in my heart. What had I said? Was She not willing? Why did I suggest my departure instead of waiting for Her to tell me? I felt a wrench at my heart and I blurted out: "I would rather stay a few more days." A smile lit all Her face. "Yes," She said. In the afternoon the picture rapidly changed. The temperature had risen to 101 degrees. There was a

definite respiratory distress. The Mother came into the room at 4 p.m. and stood watching. All the afternoon we had found it difficult to get Him to drink water or fruit juice, so now we sought Her help. She brought the spoon near His lips. Immediately He opened His eyes, took a few sips and lapsed back into unresponsiveness. The Mother came with us into the ante-room and then for the first time declared: "He is fully conscious within but is losing interest in Himself". We could understand very little and dared not question further. Satya was restless as energetic treatment could not be instituted. The Mother simply said: "It all depends on Him."

As the darkness closed in upon us our hearts grew heavier. At times Nirod or Champaklal would offer Him sips to drink and He would even remark on His choice of tomato or orange juice or something of that sort, then would lapse back into a state of unresponsiveness.

Not once would He say or at any time indicate that He was uncomfortable or thirsty, but if we changed His position or offered Him a drink He smilingly accepted it. The Mother came at 11 o'clock at night as usual; the moment She offered Him a drink He was all alert and obediently drank a cupful of fruit juice — then again He lapsed into a state of repose.

The distress continued now with little sign of abating and the Mother took me into the ante-room remarking, "I don't know, He has no interest in Himself." I suggested intravenous medication from the next day on-

wards, but She advised me not to disturb Him.

The long night passed, a long and worrying night. Nirod and Champaklal kept watch throughout. If there is a quiver of the lips, — it may be that He wants a drink. If a shake of the hand — perhaps He needs His handkerchief. They are there to serve Him; that is their sadhana — life dedicated to the service of their Master. I remembered Sri Aurobindo one day telling me of his early days of sadhana, when he used to sit up all through the night. Champaklal, then a mere boy, would lie on the stairs below, waiting for any summons. On another occasion some time before, I mentioned to Sri Aurobindo that Dr. Nirod would change the medicine when needed; He remarked, "Nirod is no doctor to me."

We continued keeping a careful watch on the urinary flow and He was still passing 50 ozs. in 24 hrs. at sp. gr. of 1012-1010. Nirod would sit by the bottle and watch each drop as it fell and if there was any delay, which was often the case, he would immediately draw my attention.

December 4th — At dawn His temperature had dropped to 99 degrees. The respiratory distress was negligible and He seemed bright and responsive. The morning duties were over and we settled Him in His usual sitting position. There He sat majestic and serene. At about 9 a.m., the Mother came and helped Him to take a light breakfast. As She walked into the ante-room, the room used for our consultations, I smiled to Her and said, "The Master seems cheerful again and taking inte-

rest." The only answer She made was "Mmm" and then went out of the room.

I settled by the side of the bed and gently massaged the Master's body while Nirod and Champaklal were attending to their duties. After a little while He opened His eyes and asked the time. I told Him 10 o'clock, I saw He was in a mood to talk, so I ventured: "How do you feel?" He replied, "I am comfortable." There was a pause; He looked at the clock and then asked how Bengal was faring, especially the refugees. I narrated to Him their pitiable plight and implored: "Surely the Divine can help them?" My Lord answered, "Yes, if Bengal seeks the Divine." He closed His eyes and went into silence (samadhi).

But alas, it was only a brief lull — a belied hope. From midday the respiratory difficulty reappeared with greater amplitude and the temperature went up to 102 degrees. This time signs of distress could be seen in the face but there was not a word, not a protest.

The Mother came at about 1 p.m. She watched for some time before entering the adjoining room with me. Then She said, "He is withdrawing."

Though He looked apparently unconscious, whenever He was offered drinks, He would wake up and take a few sips and wipe His mouth himself with His handkerchief. To all of us it seemed apparent that a consciousness came from outside when He was almost nor-

mal, and then withdrew when the body quivered and sank down in distress. He was no longer there !

By 5 o'clock again He showed signs of improvement. He was quite responsive. We helped Him out of His bed. After which He walked to the armchair to rest. For the moment He seemed a different personality. He sat there with His eyes closed — calm and composed with a radiating consciousness. We remarked on the majestic beauty of His form as He sat there; such calm and beatitude brought to my mind the Vedic Rishis. But this did not last long. After three quarters of an hour He became restless and wanted to be back in bed. Respiratory distress appeared with redoubled momentum. From midday onwards the urine output which had been good all these days definitely diminished and the distress was very prominent. Though He seemed to be unconscious He was not, which was evident by the fact that He drew Champaklal several times to His breast and kissed him lovingly and this Divine compassionate embrace was extended to Nirod and myself. It may be mentioned that this emotional behaviour was evident here for the first time; He had taken nothing to drink the whole day.

The Mother came back after Her usual attendance at the playground. She laid her garland at the foot of the bed, a thing which She was doing daily, and stood watching Sri Aurobindo. She looked so grave and quiet that it almost distressed me. I went to the ante-room to wait for Her. She entered and I gave Her the re-

port and told Her that glucose had been given by Satya and we wanted to arrange for intravenous infusions etc. She said quietly and firmly, "I told you this is not necessary, He has no interest in Himself, He is withdrawing".

We sat round His bed, wondering why He was losing interest in Himself; He, if He so desired, could certainly cure Himself as He had done on so many other occasions, — Nirod has seen Him curing the illnesses of others. But now at this crucial hour He had no interest in Himself! Was He going to sacrifice Himself?

At about 11 p.m. the Mother came into the room and helped Sri Aurobindo to drink half a cup of tomato juice. A strange phenomenon — a body which for the moment is in agony, unresponsive, labouring hard for breath, suddenly becomes quiet; a consciousness enters the body, He is awake and normal. He finishes the drink, then, as the consciousness withdraws, the body lapses back into the grip of agony.

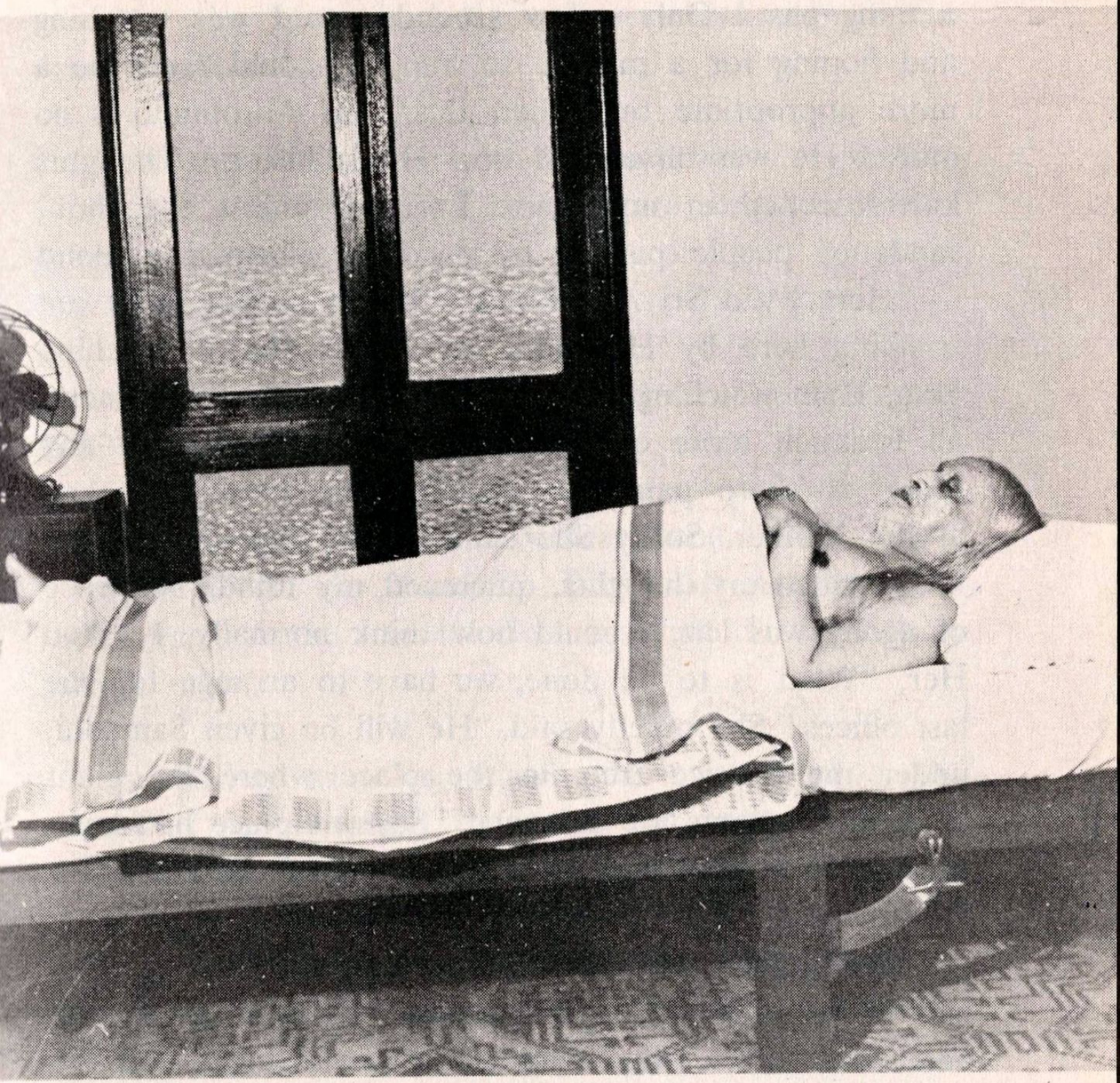
At midnight the Mother came again into the room, looked intently for some time as if there was a silent exchange of thought between them; then She left.

At 1 a.m. (5th) She returned and again looked at the Lord and stood at the foot of the bed. There was no sign of agony, fear, or anxiety on Her face. Not a thought, not a feeling could I fathom in Her expression. With Her eyes She asked me to go into the other room and She followed me in. She asked, "What do

you think ? Can I retire for one hour ?" This is a significant hour: The Mother retires — Her consciousness leaves Her body, none are to call or enter Her room then. This is imperative. — I murmured, "Mother, this is beyond me." She said, "Call me when the time comes".

I stood behind the Master and started stroking His hair which He always liked. Nirod and Champaklal sat by the side of the bed and were caressing His feet. We were all quietly watching Him. We now knew that anything might happen any time, only a miracle could save us and the world. I perceived a slight quiver in His body, almost imperceptible. He drew up His arms and put them on His chest, one overlapping the other — then all stopped. Death, the cruel death that was waiting so long — we had been keeping vigil for it — had descended on our Lord. His respiration failed. I told Nirod to go and fetch the Mother. It was 1-20 a.m.

Almost immediately the Mother entered the room. She stood there, near the feet of Sri Aurobindo. Her hair had been undressed and was flowing about Her shoulders. Her look was so fierce that I could not face those eyes. With a piercing gaze She stood there. At exactly 1.26 a.m. I saw and I said all was over. Champaklal could not bear it and sobbingly he implored, "Mother, tell me Dr. Sanyal is not right, He is alive." The Mother looked at him and he became quiet and composed as if touched by a magic wand. She stood there for more than half an hour. My hands were still on His forehead. My mind wandered. He lay, my Guru,



Sri Aurobindo

Mahasamadhi — 5. 12. 1950

Rishi Sri Aurobindo, Avatar of the new era of the dawn, a thing past! Only a few seconds ago I was watching and hoping for a miracle to happen; could there be a more appropriate time than this? Sri Aurobindo is no more! He was alive, and now He is history. Thoughts kaleidoscoped in my brain. I could almost see thousands of people passing by the bed, whispering aloud — "Here lived Sri Aurobindo." But it cannot be; I am standing here by His side, my hands almost touching Him, I am watching Him breathe, yes, every movement, all is much more quiet now, — I could not think any more. A sharp pain went through my head. I looked at the Mother. Softly She came to me and touched my head, stilled my thoughts, quietened my mind. No trace of agony was left, I could now think normally. I asked Her, "What is to be done, we have to arrange for the last offices." She quietly said, "He will be given Samadhi, under the Service tree, in the place where the giant maidenhair plants are arranged." So, this place had been earmarked beforehand; such is the way of the Divine!

The Mother also reminded me of the formalities that had to be observed, a French doctor must certify the death first. Then only members of the Ashram and the public could be informed. Nolini Gupta and Amrita were called and stood there stunned. Pavitra stood at the feet of the Master, tears rolling down his cheeks.

We were busy in dressing the Lord. The Mother had already agreed to my request to call the Ashram photographers (sadhaks) to take the last pictures.

The physician of the Hospital, Dr. Sukumaran came and saw the Master's body and we both signed the death certificate.

Now the sadhaks of the Ashram were to be informed. It was now dawn, the eastern sky was slowly getting clearer and clearer, a shaft of light appeared over the horizon. Quietly I left the main Ashram.

As I sat by the window, bewildered, in my room at Golconde, I saw the hurried but silent progress of the Ashramites towards the main Ashram.—Sri Aurobindo has passed away — I felt a violent pang in my heart. I looked at the sky. Look !... There, Sri Aurobindo is rising again — the eternal Sun bursting forth with a million rays.

As the day wore on, longer and longer became the stream of people, eager but calm and patient, to have a last Darshan of the great Rishi. In the afternoon I again entered the room where our Lord lay serene and majestic. A never-ending stream of people, laymen, clergymen, doctors, lawyers, rickshaw pullers, labourers, rich men, poor men, all filed past the Sage, silent but inspired. At dusk the Ashram door was closed. The Mother blessed me, asking me to come again early in the morning. I left for Golconde. Champaklal and Nirod were keeping vigil night and day.

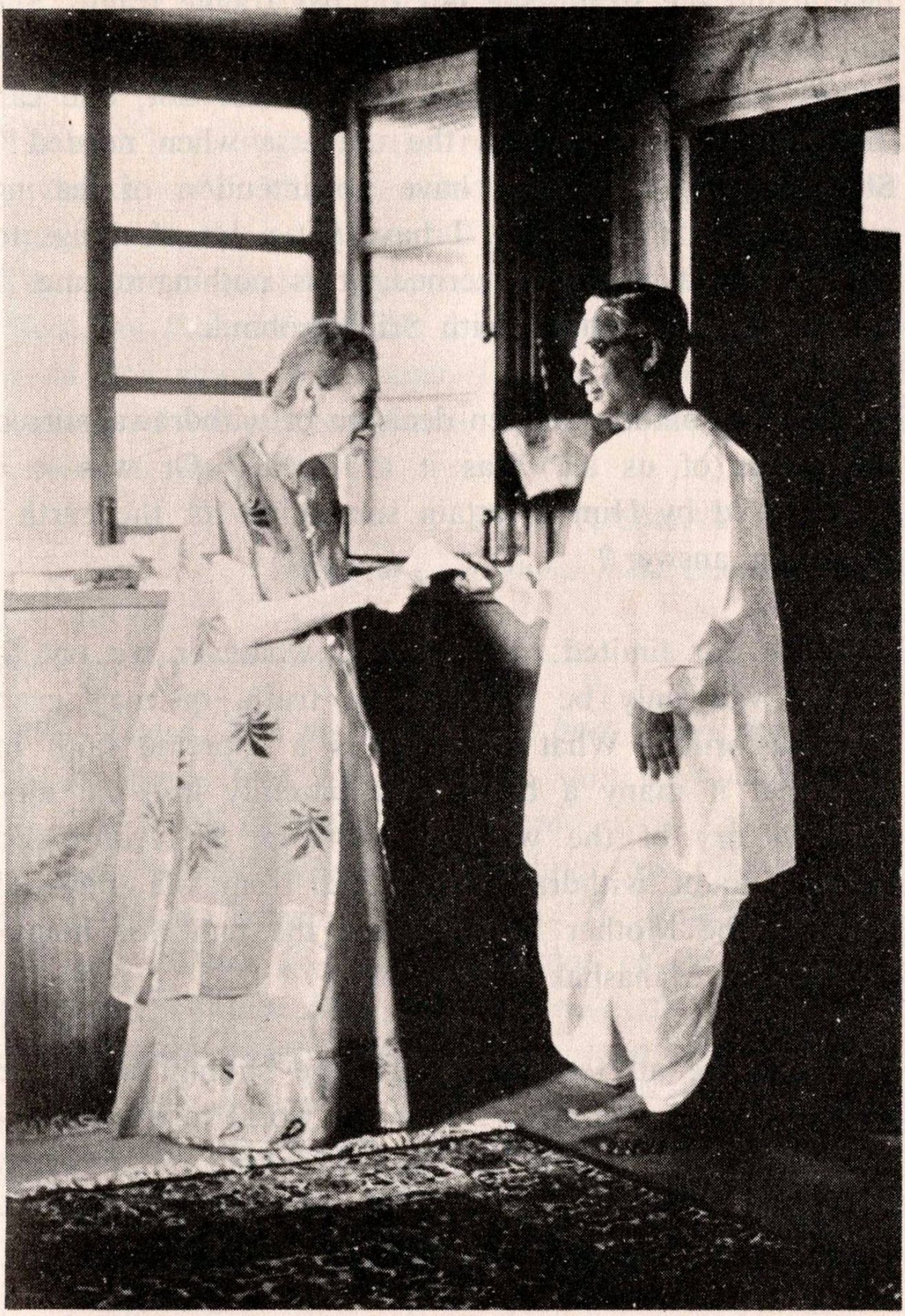
December 6th — I entered Sri Aurobindo's room before dawn. Mother and I had a look at Him; how

wonderful, how beautiful He looked, with a golden hue ! There were no signs of death as science had taught me, no evidence of the slightest discoloration, or decomposition. The Mother whispered, "As long as the supramental light does not pass away, the body will not show any signs of decomposition, and it may be a day or it may take many more days." I whispered to Her, "Where is the light you speak of — can I not see it ?" I was then kneeling by Sri Aurobindo's bed, by the Mother's feet. She smiled at me and with infinite compassion put her hand on my head. There He was — with a luminous mantle of bluish golden hue around Him.

With the morning came the procession of people, taking a last glimpse of the Divine Master. The Mother said to me, "People do not know what a tremendous sacrifice He has made for the world. About a year ago, while I was discussing things I remarked that I felt like leaving this body of mine. He spoke out in a very firm tone, 'No, this can never be. If necessary for this transformation I might go, you will have to fulfil our yoga of supramental descent and transformation !' "

After that night, there dawned on us the third day of Sri Aurobindo's passing. The Mother and I had a look at His body. As yet there was no sign of decomposition. The French surgeon corroborated the findings, this being required by the law of the state.

I was talking with the Mother, in Her room. In my own foolish way I voiced my apprehension for Her



Dr. Sanyal with the Mother

(In the Mother's Room, February, 1960)

health and the strain She put on her fragile frame. She smiled at me, and asked, "Do you think I get all this energy from my frugal meals? Of course not, one can draw infinite energy from the universe when needed!" She also added, "No, I have no intention of leaving my body for the present. I have yet a lot of things to do. So far as I am concerned, it is nothing to me. I am in constant contact with Sri Aurobindo."

Sri Aurobindo's sudden decision of withdrawal stirred the minds of us all. Was it a retreat? Or was it a means used by Him to attain something for the earth? Who can answer?

With our limited mental logic, whatever we try to explain will only be part of the truth, or may even be a distortion. What we need is a supreme faith in Him that if many a battle is apparently lost the ultimate victory of the war is inevitable. Sri Aurobindo has no doubt withdrawn from us, from our physical eye, but the Mother is continuing the fight for humanity as the Mahashakti.

While we all feel as if we were sliding down the incline to disappointment, — for the world torn with dissension, distrust, hatred and greed, looking for a ray in the sky, a divine gesture — for the uplift of humanity — a transformed humanity — the Mother holds out HOPE.

I took leave of the Mother on the 7th evening — taking a last look at the Master's luminous body, —

the Divine in a mortal frame, beautiful, calm, and still without a sign of decomposition. I naively asked the Mother, "Why was I not allowed to treat the Lord as I would have done in the routine way, and why was I called in?" Mother consoled me by saying, "We wanted you to be here, not so much for treatment." The Mother blessed me three times and all my sorrows, my disappointments, my doubts vanished, and my mind was aglow with hope. I bowed at Her feet, and looked up to see the Divine Mother, the Mahashakti smiling at me.

DR. PRABHAT SANYAL

(Reprint from *Mother India*, December 1953)

Lord, this morning Thou hast given me the assurance that Thou wouldst stay with us until Thy work is achieved, not only as a consciousness which guides and illumines but also as a dynamic Presence in action. In unmistakable terms Thou hast promised that all of Thyself would remain here and not leave the earth atmosphere until earth is transformed. Grant that we may be worthy of this marvellous Presence and that henceforth everything in us be concentrated on the one will to be more and more perfectly consecrated to the fulfilment of Thy sublime Work.

Dec. 7, 1950 *The Mother*

The Mother's Birth Centenary

The 21st of February, 1978, is the Birth Centenary Day of our Mother. We know, to some extent at least, what the Mother has done for us, endured and prepared for us. To express our gratitude to her, we can do nothing better than be what she wished us to be. In an answer to a question on a similar occasion — the Birth Centenary of Sri Aurobindo — she had prayed on our behalf, "Grant that in this year of his centenary we may truly understand what he has taught us and in all sincerity put it into practice."

Let us individually take an irrevocable decision that henceforth our entire life will belong to the Mother alone. "O Lord, let me be what you want me to be", "Supreme Lord, Eternal Truth, let us obey Thee alone and live according to Truth" — this kind of aspiration in the consciousness and concentration of the mind, heart, will and all the other elements of the being on the Divine alone, are the two primary needs. We, the readers of the AIM, may always remember these words of Sri Aurobindo, "By remaining psychically open to the Mother, all that is necessary for work or Sadhana develops progressively, that is one of the chief secrets, the central secret of the Sadhana."

Here are a few suggestions which may be followed in our daily life every day:

(1) To sit quietly for a few minutes daily and ask

oneself, "Why am I here? What exactly do I want to achieve in life?"

(2) To read every day regularly something from the writings of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. The attitude during such readings should not be of merely understanding it, but of opening to their Light.

(3) In all pursuits, intellectual or physical, our one motto should be, "Remember and Offer". Let whatever we do be done as an offering to the Divine.

(4) To undertake at least for an hour a day, some work without any motive of personal gain and if possible in an ego-less spirit. It may be the offering of our talents as a doctor, lawyer, engineer, teacher, etc. or the offering of our services in spreading the message of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother for the new life of tomorrow — an unegoistic life, a divine life upon the earth.

This can be undertaken in a number of ways, Sri Aurobindo Society has given various suggestions, see the Information Letter of this issue, pages 38 to 41. Whatever we do, let us always remember these two messages of the Mother:

1. Let nothing short of Perfection be your ideal in work and you are sure to become a true instrument of the Divine.

2. From the point of view of a spiritual life, it is not what you do that matters most, but the way in which it is done and the consciousness you put into it.

Editor

Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers for India,
No. R. N 22334/71
Regd. No. M. 8943

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a Divine Teaching.
It is better to learn it.
The best is to live it.

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Read **"ABHIPSA"**— All India Magazine in **MARATHI**

Published by: Sri Aurobindo Society, Morshi Road, Amravati.